

Claims

1. A method for processing contents within envelopes having first, second, third and fourth edges, comprising  
5 the steps of:

conveying the envelopes along a document path;  
cutting a first edge of one of the envelopes;  
cutting a second edge of the one envelope;  
cutting a third edge of the one envelope  
10 setting the depth of cut of the third edge so that  
the third edge depth of cut is greater than the  
depth of cut of either the first edge or the  
second edge.

15 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of setting  
comprises the step of setting the third edge depth  
of cut so that the third edge depth of cut is at  
least twice as great as the depth of cut of either  
the first edge or the second edge.

20 3. The method of claim 1 comprising the step of  
extracting the contents from the one envelope.

4. An apparatus for processing a leading envelope  
25 having contents comprising one or more documents and a  
trailing envelope having contents comprising one or more  
documents, comprising:

a system transport for conveying the envelopes and  
their contents along a document path;  
30 a feeder for feeding envelopes into the system  
transport;  
a thickness detector for detecting the thickness of  
the leading envelope;  
a system controller for controlling the feeder to

maintain proper spacing along the document path  
between the envelopes and their contents;  
wherein the system controller controls the feeder  
for feeding the trailing envelope in response  
to the detected thickness of the leading  
envelope.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 comprising an extractor for  
extracting the contents from the envelopes.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 comprising a singulator for  
separating the contents and serially conveying the  
documents along the document path.

7. A method for processing a leading envelope having  
contents comprising one or more documents and a trailing  
envelope having contents comprising one or more  
documents, comprising the steps of:

feeding the leading document along a document path  
from an input bin;  
measuring the thickness of the leading document;  
determining the gap necessary between the leading  
envelope and the trailing envelope in response  
to the measured thickness wherein the gap is  
sufficient to avoid interference between the  
envelopes and their contents as they are  
conveyed along the document path;  
controlling the feeding of the trailing document  
along the document path to provide the  
determined gap.